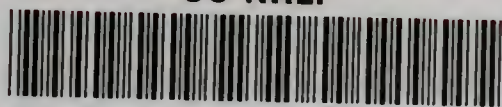


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EDITH

ROMANCE OF 1066.





Souvenir of January 18th, 1881,

Dedicated to my daughter

MRS. WYKEHAM MARTIN.



EDDITH

*Romance of the year 1066, suggested by
thoughts of the great author's * "Harold,"
and two fair Kentish Memories.*

BY

MRS. PITT DRAFFEN

* *Sir E. Bulwer Lytton.*


LOAN STACK

PR 4627
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EDITH.

*Romance of the year 1066, suggested by
thoughts of the great author's * "Harold,"
and two fair Kentish Memories.*

I.

 H ! once again let me recall
My childhood's blest Spring-tide ;
When Harold by the ivied wall
Sought Edith, his fair bride.

II.

Too oft stern Duty's clinging care
Kept the betrothed apart ;
For King and Country ever were
Rooted in thy loyal heart.

* Sir E. Bulwer Lytton.

III.

But when at eventide we met
Beside Thor's altar stone,
The glist'ning stars our vows reset
In their own love-lit zone.

IV.

One shadow only seemed to veil
Our joy, and grief awake,
The king and priests within the pale
Of kin our vows would break.

V.

And, linking with the cloister's cell
Freedom from unblest ties,
The Queen her godchild counsels well
Love changeless *most* to prize.

VI.

Oh! Saint Queen, through the convent gate
Rushes thy meed of peace—
But Edith, Life's glad joys await,
And joys the years increase.

VII.

Was ne'er a time when o'er Thy brow
Thoughts bright as hers were twin'd,
Ere, on thy country's altars, Thou
In suffering all resigned?

VIII.

But hark! what anxious rumours soar
Of Norman rule the while;
And England's destiny once more
From Edith cares beguile.

IX.

His mother too claims Harold's troth,
From William's Court release
Of Haco and her joy Woolnoth,
Long hostages of peace.

X.

And Hilda too by charms hath long
Sought clearer light to gain;
But Edith sees dim shadows throng,
And hears the sad refrain

XI.

Of Sanguelac ! and broken vows—,
Of saintly relics' might ;
The frauds that William too well sows,
On his doom'd head alight.

XII.

Her words are vain, Harold the brave,
Leal-hearted, aye and true,
Dares first the dangers of the wave
To the famed shores of Rou.

XIII.

At last ambition took the reins,
With Hilda's goal the lure ;
Lost in her weird and tangled skeins
Dimm'd Edith's lessons pure.

XIV.

How wisely Gurth, Earl Harold chides,
Dread danger to forego—
Uncertainty in which abides
All England's weal or woe.

XV.

Oh ! fatal voyage, treacherous land !
Thence shalt thou ne'er depart
Without that brand, that deepest brand
When Conscience pierc'd thy heart.

XVI.

For England's sake, too, guile met guile,
Thy freedom link'd her own ;
And faithless promises awhile
Beckon like Hope long flown.

XVII.

Thus to win freedom ne'er more free
Of Hope's glad smile bereft,
His Honor stain'd—ah ! misery !
What hath proud Harold left ?

XVIII.

The Waltham Monastery bells
Are chiming Vespers' hour ;
Harold's desire to anguish swells
In Ailred's ears to pour

XIX.

The tale of all that Norman ruth
Had will'd against his life ;
Lip-perjur'd England's crown forsooth
Dared he thus merge all strife ?

XX.

Was there no pardon, no release
From rash vows wrung by pain ?
A sin to save his country's peace ?
Blest lot ! to bear her bane !

XXI.

Pardon ? ah ! yes, but penitence
In fitting deeds must show,
For England and her laws' defence
Canst dearest hopes forego ?

XXII.

Now near her shores Hadrada dread,
The poet warrior bold,
False Tostig has by avarice led,
And England's crown nigh sold.

XXIII.

Him Harold vanquished, on the coast,
 New perils need his aid—
 Mercia, Northumbria a host
 By civil war invade.

XXIV.

Now thanes and ceorls, and priest and friend
 By council wise decide
 O'er England—Love must Duty lend,
 “Aldyth shall be thy bride.”

XXV.

But Harold pleads for his life's life,
 The twin soul wed to his—
 With sorrow every lot is rife,
 But not such woe as this.

XXVI.

Edith, enchain'd by memory's bliss,
 Spares Harold this dread choice ;
 Re-hallows by her parting kiss
 The bonds of England's voice.

XXVII.

Grieve not Beloved, tho' doomed to part,
How could I shed a tear?
Whilst thou and England share my heart
All is sweet for cause so dear!

XXVIII.

Thy Edith is not weaker now
Than in those happy days
When thou pure seeds of Faith did'st sow,
And Love shed virtue's rays.

XXIX.

Then in such strength I breathe farewell,
Remembering pride of yore,
Nor could I love thee now so well
Lov'dst thou not England more.

XXX.

No woman tempts thee from my side,
Nor rival deem'st thou fair—
Thy Country aye shall be thy bride,
And woo thee from Despair.

XXXI.

England not Aldyth sacred trust
With Edith shalt entwine
Self-sacrifice—consoling must
The light of Freedom shine.

XXXII.

Illum'ning e'en in after years
With triumph our sad path ;
Just men deem Edith, amid tears,
Worthy to share thy hearth.

XXXIII.

Loving thee as her guardian star,
Could such love be a sin ?
Resigning for thy sorrow's war
The church's ban would win.

XXXIV.

Sad Queen ! thy warnings in mine ear
Now unforbidden rise,
The bough is dead, the leaflets sere,
'Tis sunset, now Hope dies.

I dread the cloister's cell no more,
Beloved ! thence for thee,
Morning and evening prayer shall soar,
Thy shield Faith's blessing be.

* * * * *

Ages are past, still Harold's Fame
Brave British hearts e'er guard,
Last of the Saxons still thy name
Breathes Peace Thy Life's reward.



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